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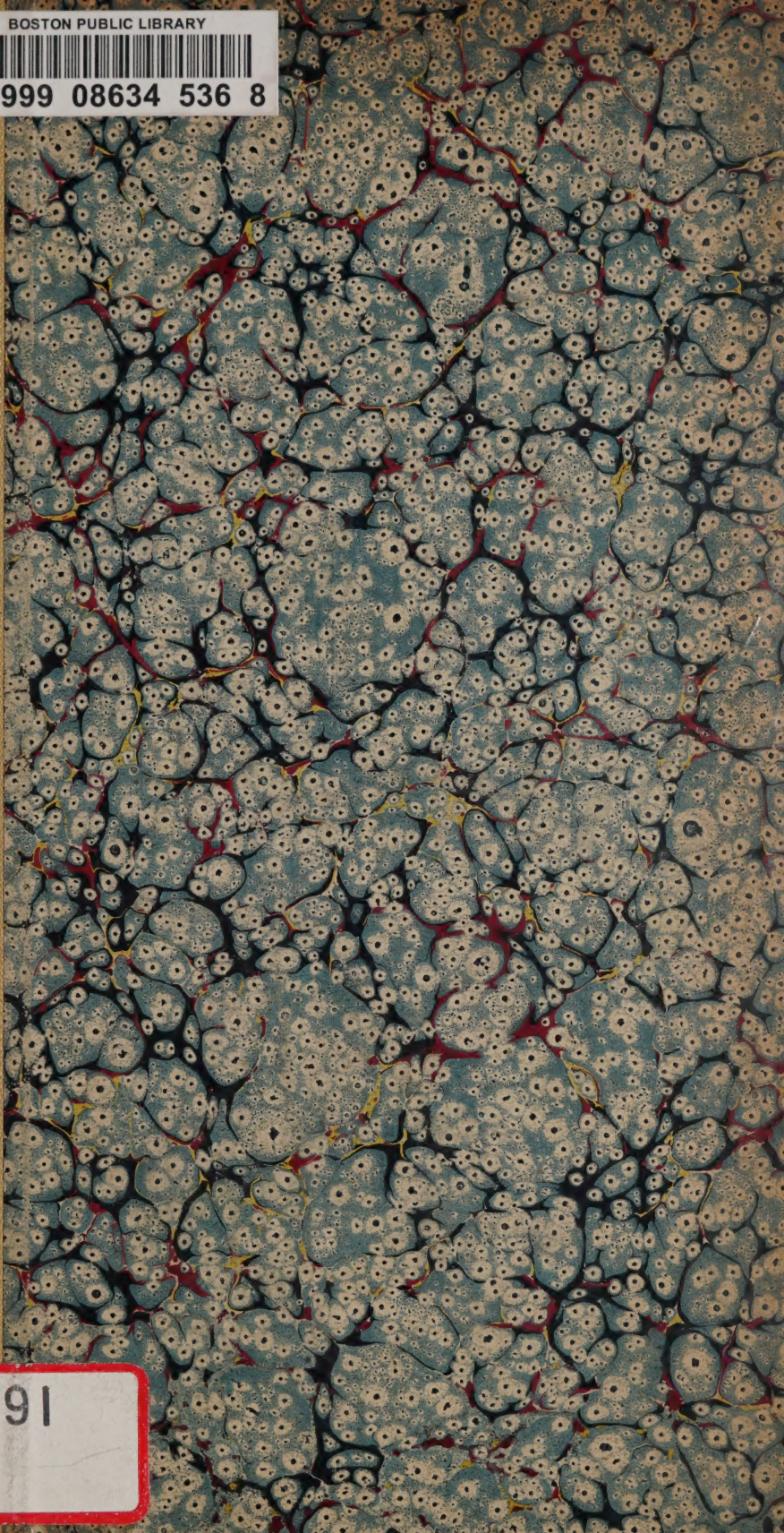

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REV. MR. DURFEE'S SERMON

BEFORE THE

NORFOLK EDUCATION SOCIETY.

1839.

A

SERMON

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

AUXILIARY EDUCATION SOCIETY

OF

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NORFOLK COUNTY,

AT THEIR

ANNUAL MEETING IN THE FIRST PARISH OF DEDHAM,

June 12, 1839.

BY CALVIN DURFEE,

PASTOR OF THE SOUTH CHURCH IN SAID TOWN.

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SERMON.

GENESIS XLIX. 10.

AND UNTO HIM SHALL THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE BE.

THERE is a series of predictions recorded in the Old Testament relating to the coming and work of the Messiah. As the time for their accomplishment drew near, these predictions became more and more minute. More than sixteen hundred years before the Saviour's advent, the time and circumstances of his appearing were foretold with a surprising accuracy and precision. When the patriarch Jacob lay upon his dying bed, he called his twelve sons, and said, "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befal you in the last days." See the venerable man as he gives them his prophetic counsel and parting admonitions. Guided by the spirit of prophecy he looked through many intervening centuries, and uttered concerning his fourth son this remarkable prediction:—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; *and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*"

The term sceptre evidently denotes that Judah

should hold the preëminence or rule among the several tribes. This preëminence or authority was not to depart from the descendants of Judah until Shiloh had come. The literal fulfilment of the prophecy here recorded, clearly determines the signification of the term Shiloh, to be one of the glorious names of the Messiah.

It is interesting and instructive to observe how remarkably this prophecy has been fulfilled. Preeminence or authority did not depart from the tribe of Judah till after the Saviour's advent. During the Babylonish captivity, though their bondage was exceeding heavy and oppressive, still their privileges were not wholly taken from them. After their return to their own land they enjoyed their civil and ecclesiastical polity till the advent of Christ. But shortly after this, their city and temple were utterly destroyed, their civil and ecclesiastical privileges were wholly taken from them, and they themselves dispersed into all lands, a poor, weak and despised remnant of a once great and powerful nation. Ever since the Saviour's crucifixion, the sceptre has wholly departed from the Jewish nation. This consideration was so perplexing to a learned Jew more than seven hundred years ago, that he wrote thus to a friend:—"I would fain learn from thee, out of the testimonies of the law and the prophets, and other Scriptures, why the Jews are thus smitten in this captivity wherein we are, which may be properly called, THE PERPETUAL ANGER OF GOD, because it hath no end. For it is now above a thousand years since we were carried away cap-

tive by Titus; and yet our fathers who worshipped idols, killed the prophets, and cast the law behind their back, were only punished with a seventy years' captivity, and then brought home again; but now there is no end of our calamities, nor do the prophets promise any." This circumstance in their history must embarrass a reflecting Jew the more it is investigated.

But as soon as the gospel had been fully preached, the gathering of the nations unto Christ commenced. Converts soon became numerous. *Unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* Nor will this prophecy receive its full accomplishment until all the nations are gathered into the fold and kingdom of the Redeemer.

Let us then contemplate the glorious event here foretold, and show

I. The certainty of its accomplishment.

II. The means of its accomplishment.

III. The means of its accomplishment might be increased. And

IV. Suggest a few considerations for continued exertion in this great enterprise.

I. The glorious event foretold in our text will be fully accomplished. I can only glance at some of the topics which furnish animating evidence of this.

This prediction received a partial accomplishment *on the day of Pentecost.* There was then a sudden and wonderful gathering of the people unto Christ. On that memorable day, when vast multitudes from

all nations were convened at Jerusalem, Peter preached the gospel "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." His astonished hearers received the truth as the dry and thirsty earth drinks in the rain of heaven. Three thousand were converted in a single day. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Thousands and thousands were suddenly led to an open avowal of the Christian faith. So that in a very short time, not Jerusalem only, but the whole Roman empire was filled with the disciples of the Lord. Thus the people were seen gathering unto Shiloh.

The event foretold in our text received a further accomplishment, *when the gathering in of the Gentiles commenced.* The Redeemer commenced his triumphant march among the Gentiles at the baptism of Cornelius.* The separating wall between Jews and Gentiles then began to be broken down. Light then began to shine upon those who had long been shrouded in gross moral darkness. Repentance and remission of sins were then granted to the Gentiles. It was a day of God's wonder-working power. Foreseeing this glorious event, the prophet describes the nations as flocking to Christ "as a cloud and as doves to their windows."

The prediction in our text is receiving a still further accomplishment, *in every accession which is made to the kingdom of Christ.* For, what is every conversion which takes place, but a gradual accomplishment of this glorious event. In every revival

* Acts x. 44—48.

of religion we see a partial fulfilment of ancient prophecy. What numbers in a single congregation have, in these days of the Spirit's gracious visitation, been gathered into the fold of the Redeemer. Where is the church which has not received large accessions within a few years past. How certainly has Christ girded his sword upon his thigh, and is now riding forth triumphantly in the chariot of the everlasting gospel, conquering and to conquer. How certainly will he continue to multiply the subjects of his grace until every Jew, now without a prince and sceptre, shall be gathered among his chosen people;—until all the nations shall lift up their glad voices saying, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him; he will save us; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

The prediction in our text will receive its full accomplishment *at the dawn of the millennium.* But can so great and glorious an event be confidently anticipated? My brethren, when we look over the face of the whole earth, what do we behold but a valley of dry bones? And well may we ask with the astonished prophet as he surveyed the valley overspread with human skeletons, "Can these bones live?" Will all the nations ever be completely disenthralled? Will the darkness in which they have been so long enveloped, ever be completely dissipated? Will the clear light of the gospel ever illuminate the vast regions now overspread with pagan darkness? Will all the inhabitants of the earth ever be brought cordially to submit to the mediatorial reign of Christ? Yes,

thanks to redeeming love, all this *can* be done, and *will* be done. The revolutions of time are not more certain. There are indeed great and appalling obstacles to be encountered, but they are not insurmountable.

The promises of the Bible remove all doubt on this subject. "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Christ "shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." Zion will arise and shine, her light being come, the glory of the Lord being risen upon her. "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." The sacred leaven will diffuse itself through the whole mass. The grain of mustard-seed will become a majestic tree. The many—many promises relating to this subject will be accomplished in all their fullness and in all their glory. Reasoning from natural causes we should have no ground to expect the latter-day glory. The drift and tendency of human nature is to wax worse and worse. But relying upon the divine promises, the conversion of this world may be confidently anticipated. "I the Lord will hasten it in his time."

The heathen, then, may rage, the kings of the earth may set themselves, and the rulers may take counsel together; Satan may come down in great wrath; but the promises cannot fail. The darkness

of ages shall be scattered by the pervading light of the Sun of Righteousness.

> "The indications of a brighter day,
> Streak the dark east with many a deepening ray;
> The cross is planted there; and from its light
> Flashes of glory fall on pagan night."

Let us consider

II. The means of its accomplishment. The event here foretold will not be accomplished independently of human effort. It is readily conceded that God could convert the world by a miracle in a single day. Or he could employ angels for his ministers instead of men. Or he could create men holy, and continue them in a state of holiness. Or he could change their present natures without employing any instrumentality whatever. He could create a harvest of grain in an uncultivated wilderness. Or he could furnish men with food from heaven, as he supplied the wants of the ancient Israelites. But this is not to be expected. If we enjoy the fruits of the earth we must obtain them in the appointed way. We must cultivate the soil, and enjoy the rain and dew and sunshine of heaven, or in vain shall we look for a harvest. So too in the moral world. The means must be employed. The gospel must be preached, embraced and obeyed; or in vain shall we look for a harvest of glory in the world to come. If then all the inhabitants of this earth are ever brought under the enlightening, purifying and elevating influence of Christianity, there is a great work to be done; and we must not expect

that it will be accomplished by angels or miracles. Under God it will be accomplished by man. The quenchless ardor of Christian effort, sustained by the Christian's faith will finally triumph.

How was the gospel propagated at first? Was it not done by human effort—self-denying and persevering effort? Does God ordinarily dispense with means in the conversion and sanctification of men? Were the thousands on the day of Pentecost converted without means? Were churches ever gathered in the age of miracles independently of human instrumentality? Without human effort would those green and verdant spots at the South Sea Islands ever have been reclaimed from the sterility and barrenness of a hundred ages? "Where no vision is the people perish."

Among the means to be employed for the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom the most important place must be assigned to the preaching of the gospel and the prayers of Christians. Prayer, humble, believing and submissive prayer, is so indispensable, that they who make mention of the Lord are directed not to keep silence nor give him any rest, "till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Great and precious promises to prayer are on record. These promises we must plead. If we desire that a full supply of laborers may be speedily sent forth to gather in the whitening harvest, we must obey the Saviour's command,—"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." And here, my brethren, allow me to inquire whether we are not

chargeable with a great deficiency in this respect. We have prayed for this object, but has it not been in a general and incidental manner? Have we dwelt upon this subject as one of the first and highest importance? In answer to the united and persevering prayers of his people, God delights to display the exuberance of his goodness—the exceeding riches of his grace. And had this object been carried to the throne of grace as frequently and as fervently as it ought to have been, would there have been at the present time such an alarming deficiency of well-qualified ministers of the gospel?

But deficient as we may have been in the duty of prayer, still this has not been our greatest deficiency. If we pray we must act. Why should we wish to separate what God has joined together? Is it scriptural—is it reasonable to expect a blessing without means, when it is to be obtained only in the diligent use of means? What would you think of that church now destitute of a pastor, which should earnestly pray that God would send them a pastor after his own heart, and then take no further means to obtain one? What would you think of the man whose fields were white already to harvest, and who should continue to pray from morning till evening that his harvest might be gathered in independently of human labor? What would you think of our Missionaries, who have gone far hence to the Gentiles, were they daily and hourly to pray for the conversion of the heathen around them, without making any further efforts to bring them to the light and knowledge of salvation? This brings us to

the point. What if we, my brethren, were to pray without ceasing for a full supply of competent religious teachers, and yet should not employ the requisite means to qualify them for the work of the ministry? Could we expect to witness an answer to our prayers? Although the excellency of the power is of God, yet if we pray that more laborers may be sent forth into the vineyard, we must use the same diligence and zeal in the work of their preparation as though all were depending upon our individual and united instrumentality.

The American Education Society has under its patronage and care at the present time, in the various stages of their education, about a thousand young men of promising piety and talents on their way to the ministry. Other young men in indigent circumstances are every year hopefully converted and brought into the churches, who might, were they educated, become eminently useful in the ministry. And in view of the wants of the world, and while the fields are white already to harvest, and the laborers are few, can it be that we are at loss what is our duty? While we have the means of educating these young men, will the churches refuse to aid them in their preparation for the ministry? When God has prepared the men, and while he is saying in language too plain to be misunderstood,—"Take these young men and educate them for my service in the gospel ministry," shall the requisite means to do this be withheld by those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of God's own Son? It *must* not—it *cannot* be.

I now proceed to show

III. That the means for accomplishing this object might be easily increased. My brethren, much is every year left undone which might be done. The following impressive facts from the pen of another* are worthy of serious consideration:

"It is a fact, that the churches of this country are able to raise hundreds of thousands, where they now raise thousands for the cause of benevolence, without impoverishing themselves, or even denying themselves a single comfort of life.

"It is a fact, that millions are wasted every year upon superfluities that were better dispensed with than allowed,—and that too by those who follow Him who had not 'where to lay his head.'

"It is a fact, that if our churches were convinced of the duty they owe to the world, they would cheerfully deny themselves the luxuries, and even many comforts in which they now indulge.

"It is a fact, that they are not yet convinced of their duty, nor are they sufficiently enlightened; the subject has not been laid before them in all its length and breadth, and urged with that frequency, plainness and pungency which its importance demands.

"It is a fact, that this indifference will never die a natural death,—for it derives its support from the strongest passions of corrupt nature, and it requires the most vigorous and persevering applications of truth to overcome it."

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* See a sermon preached before the Clergy at the Commencement of Williams College, September 3, 1828, by Richard S. Storrs, D. D.

In an article recently published, Rev. Dr. Matheson remarks:—"If we look at the amount of money contributed year after year, we find that all the Christians of Britain give less to the missionary cause, than is annually spent by the votaries of pleasure in their pursuit of theatrical amusements in London alone. Again, how humbling and affecting is the thought, that all that has been expended by all the great and noble religious institutions of the whole of Christendom during the last forty years, would not pay for the ardent spirits consumed in one year in Great Britain even. The calculation I have made of the amount collected, since Bible, Missionary and Tract Societies began their operations, brings the whole up to fifteen millions; while the cost of ardent spirits to the consumer, is every year above twenty millions of pounds."

But these striking statements and impressive facts are quite too general for my present purpose. I must come nearer home. I must be more particular. Could I be permitted to address every individual in the county, I would say, contribute for this object only what you can spare and never feel it, except in the rich and exquisite pleasure of doing good, and instead of paying over to the parent society an annual sum sufficient to aid twelve or fifteen young men in their preparations for the ministry, we will give twice that amount. Few and simple are the statements necessary to show that the amount of our contributions to this society might be greatly increased.

There are, if I mistake not, just about thirty

Orthodox Congregational churches in this county. Let us suppose that each of these churches is auxiliary to the County Education Society.

In each of these churches there must be upon an average ten families in affluent circumstances. Now how easy it would be for each of these families to contribute for this object every year five dollars—a sum which would make no perceptible difference in their customary appropriations or in their style of living. This would make an item of fifteen hundred dollars—more than is annually contributed for this object in this county.

In these churches there must be upon an average ten families in comfortable circumstances, though not rich. Let each of these contribute two dollars and a half annually; and we have a second item of seven hundred and fifty dollars.

In these congregations there must be upon an average ten families more who could easily contribute one dollar each; making a third item of three hundred dollars.

Connected with these congregations there must be upon an average ten enterprising young men, who could easily contribute one dollar each; making a fourth item of three hundred dollars.

Connected with these congregations there must be upon an average ten active females not included in the foregoing estimate, who could contribute to the funds of this society fifty cents each; making a fifth item of one hundred and fifty dollars.

Putting these several items together, we shall have three thousand dollars; more than twice as

much as is annually contributed in this county to aid pious, indigent youth in their preparations for the Christian ministry.

Besides, there are connected with our congregations some men of wealth, who could easily make large benefactions to this society.

In addition to all this, it would be easy to show if the time would permit, how large sums might be saved without the slightest abridgment of comfort, and with the loss of very little show. If, for example, the young men in this county would contribute to the funds of this society one half, or even one quarter of what they spend every winter in vain amusements, we will engage to aid more young men in their preparation for the sacred office than we do at present. Nay, pardon the expression, if the inhabitants of the county will give us as much as they annually spend for the single article of cigars,* it will come to more than the present amount of our contributions to the cause of charitable education. Give us the fifth part of what the lawsuits of the county annually cost the inhabitants, and it will pay the annual expenses of at least twenty-five young men in their preparations for the ministry. Have not the inhabitants of this county heretofore felt themselves able to pay some thousands of dollars

* In a letter from John Tappan, Esq., of Boston, he states:—"The amount of cigars imported into the United States in the year ending September, 1837, was over twelve hundred thousand dollars for the first cost; probably the whole cost of cigars used in the United States in the same time was four millions of dollars; and of tobacco chewed and used in snuff an equal amount, making eight millions of dollars, worse than wasted, to say nothing of the intemperance caused by its use. A cigar maker in this city judges that five times as many are made in this country as are imported." Compare the above sum with all that is annually given to support all the great and noble charitable institutions of this age!!

every year for ardent spirits, and are they not as able to contribute an equal amount now for the cause of benevolence?

Is it said in reply, that there are other benevolent institutions to be sustained. It is readily admitted that the calls on the benevolence of the public are numerous. Nor do we wish you to withhold support from them, or be indifferent to them. It is far from being our object to give an undue prominence to the Education Society. Do not forget your fellow-men in the regions of moral darkness. Do all in your power to pour upon the remote places of the earth the light of divine truth. Let the Missionary Societies, the Bible Society and other similar institutions share in your patronage and have a continued and grateful remembrance in your prayers. Forget not the sons of want and affliction in your own neighborhood. Oh, no. Go, visit the abode of poverty, and be an angel of mercy at the bedside of disease. At the same time do not forget the Education Society. In view of your circumstances, the wants of your family, the degree in which God has prospered you, the number and urgency of other calls, let every individual remember the indigent student amid his discouragements and struggles. Let every one therefore ask himself, What ought I to give? In view of that interesting account which I must one day render of my stewardship, What ought I to give?

Is it said that the churches in this county are already doing all that they consistently can to promote this object? Whose, then, are these thriving

villages, and these flourishing farms? Who maketh the "sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust?" Who is daily pouring a full tide of temporal favors around our dwellings? Who is giving us these "fruitful seasons—filling our hearts with food and gladness?" Above all, who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich?

But I must hasten

IV. To suggest a few considerations for continued and increased exertion in qualifying pious, indigent young men for the gospel ministry. It is now about twenty-four years since the American Education Society was organized. It has already afforded assistance to so many individuals that we can now hardly turn our eyes to a missionary station, or a ministerial association where one or more of its beneficiaries may not be found actively and usefully employed. Without pausing here to pay any tribute to human wisdom for what has been accomplished, suffer me to ask,—Did not the projectors of this society judge rightly as to the plain duty of qualifying more laborers to be sent forth into the Lord's vineyard? They saw that more laborers were urgently needed; they deliberated as to the best means for supplying the deficiency, and casting themselves upon Divine Providence for direction, they determined to do something towards providing faithful preachers for the destitute parts of our own land, and the perishing millions of heathen countries.—Hence arose the American

Education Society. And the question now fairly comes up, Ought this Society to be sustained? Ought it to be consecrated by the prayers, and receive the continued contributions of the Christian community, or ought it to be abandoned?—Our reply is

First. Let the Education Society be sustained, because it forms a convenient medium of communication between the Christian community and the young men to be educated. Previous to the organization of this Society, what was done towards aiding pious, indigent youth in their preparation for the ministry? The plain answer is,—Next to nothing. Why? Not surely because people were unable or unwilling to afford such assistance, but because there was no established medium of communication between themselves and the suitable persons to be educated. It is true, that wealthy individuals did in some instances assist pious young men; still no indigent youth, however ardently he might pant for the work of the ministry, knew where to apply for aid. And if the present organization should be abandoned, it would be just so again. Nothing to any good purpose would be accomplished.

Second. Let the Education Society be sustained, although occasionally one, who was charitably educated for the ministry, has proved unsuitable and defective in his character. Considering the imperfection of man, and that uncertainty which attends all human affairs, this number has been exceedingly small. The most confident opposer of

this enterprise will not assert that a large number of beneficiaries have disappointed the hopes and saddened the hearts of their friends and patrons. Why should we not expect to witness instances of disappointment in the prosecution of this work, as well as in all other human undertakings? In carrying forward any great worldly enterprise, the question with practical men is not, what is the best conceivable result, but what ought to be soberly expected. In the city of Boston more than fifty thousand dollars are annually paid for the support of its common schools. Is there never any misapplication of these funds? Do all who are sent to these schools prove to be good scholars, virtuous and useful citizens? Is it not deemed a sufficient vindication of this common school system that it has proved to be highly advantageous to the intelligence, virtue and happiness of the community? Do men abandon worldly enterprises which are found to be on the whole gainful, because in prosecuting them there is some apparent waste, or occasional disappointment? Do merchants cease to send their ships to other countries, because vessels are sometimes lost at sea? Shall parents cease to educate their own sons, because some have proved indolent or profligate?—The idea of loss or disappointment is always painful. What parent that educates a son would not rejoice to have all his fond and glowing hopes respecting that son realized? What merchant that sends a ship abroad would not rejoice to see it come back into port, laden with the wealth of other climes? So too it would sincerely rejoice

the hearts of the patrons of this society, if every youth they educate should prove to be a truly pious, self-denying, devoted and useful minister of the gospel. But when it is remembered that this society has sustained in their preparation for the ministry many who have been eminently useful in the church at home; and that just about two-thirds of all the missionaries at the Sandwich Islands, who are causing that moral wilderness to bud and blossom as the rose, were educated by this society, there is no ground for discouragement. There is no good reason for relaxing our efforts in this cause. Let it be settled then once for all, that the young men whom we propose to educate, and those who superintend their preparation for the ministry, are, like all other professed Christians, encompassed with infirmities, and constantly exposed to temptation and sin. Shall we, therefore, fold our hands and sit down, and do nothing till a race of perfect men appear?* If so we must expect at last to hear from our offended Judge the awful words,—"Ye wicked and slothful servants."

Third. Let the Education Society be sustained, because it qualifies for the ministry that class of persons who are mostly needed for the sacred office in this country. Taken as our beneficiaries in most instances are, from those classes of society where they have been early trained to habits of industry and self-denial, they are the very men to endure

* "If we give to good objects from right motives, can we not trust our money in the hands of the Lord?"—is the striking and sensible reply which the late Lieut. Gov. Phillips is *reported* to have made to the above named objection to the Education Society.

the hardships, encounter the discouragements and perform the pastoral labors of our new settlements. Some may possibly object to the correctness of this argument on the ground that a young man taken from indigent circumstances, carried through a course of education preparatory to the ministry, and then stationed upon one of the high places of Zion, may be "exalted above measure." That there may be such cases is readily admitted. As human nature is, all who enter the ministry are exposed to spiritual pride; but those who are taken from indigent circumstances are in peculiar danger. But it should be remembered that many of our most distinguished men were once indigent youth. Besides, a thorough education, and acquaintance with college life, sobers young men, and tends to cure their vanity.

Fourth. Let the Education Society be sustained, because of the moral and religious influence which its beneficiaries exert in our literary institutions. How many youth, who gave early promise of great usefulness, have been ruined in their academic course by idle and vicious associates? What considerate parent does not tremble for his beloved son when he is connected with an academy or college where there is but little principle and but little piety? Every young man of decided piety and talents, who enters a public seminary is an important acquisition. And when the number of such is large, their influence will serve most powerfully to check the waywardness and extravagance of their companions. What wealthy parent, therefore, who

has a high-minded and volatile son to educate, could not well afford to contribute to the Education Society every year all that is annually afforded to a single beneficiary, if by so doing he could secure for that son a discreet and pious room-mate?

But this is not all. There is a consideration connected with this subject which infinitely outweighs every other. These pious young men whom we educate may by their example, conversation and prayers be the means of the conversion of their fellow-students. How many of the revivals of religion, which have been enjoyed in our colleges within the last fifteen or twenty years, have, under God, been ascribed to the instrumentality of the charity scholars in those institutions? Said a President of one of our colleges,—"It is a great mistake to suppose that the time which beneficiaries spend in college is lost to the church. Look at the moral condition of our colleges, especially at the frequent revivals of religion which are now enjoyed in them. This we did not see before the American Education Society collected and sustained in them the pious indigent youth of our country. These frequent revivals are, in a great degree, to be ascribed to the blessing of God on the happy influence of these young men. Instead of being lost, I regard the time which they spend in college, as important to the interest of the church, to say the least, as any equal portion of their subsequent lives." A Professor in another college under date of 1837 writes:—"We are again blessed with a revival of religion. The influence of the charity students in producing

this state of things, under the divine blessing, has been great. Indeed, what could we do without them? No one can speak on this subject but an officer of college. Every year increases our conviction that the church would be amply paid—doubly paid, for all it expends in supporting charity students, were the effect confined to the walls of college—were every beneficiary to die the moment he leaves us." Concerning the charity students in Middlebury College, Dr. Bates, the President, writes:—"As to the beneficiaries I can in most cases give you assurance that they are maintaining a consistent Christian character, and making good attainments. Many of them are among our most enterprising young men, distinguished as Christians and as scholars." If the time would permit it would be easy to make many similar quotations, alike honorable to the piety and literary attainments of the beneficiaries.

Our colleges are sources of moral and intellectual influence to our land, and in some degree to the world. Now by liberally sustaining the Education Society the churches have it in their power to give a decidedly religious tone and character to these literary institutions, and make them, to a great extent, schools of the prophets.

Fifth. Let the Education Society be sustained, because the young men who have already been taken under its patronage, and encouraged to set their faces towards the ministry, cannot complete their prescribed course of study without the continued aid of the churches. It is required of those

who are aided by the society to refund, after entering their profession, a portion of what they have received. But as some of the beneficiaries become foreign missionaries, and not a few become pastors of feeble churches, they are on application excused from refunding any part of what they have received. During the last year about four thousand and four hundred dollars were refunded; a sum barely sufficient to pay the annual appropriations of about sixty charity students. The interest arising from the permanent funds of the society will do something towards defraying its annual expenses. But at the present time the society cannot meet its engagements to its increased number of beneficiaries without borrowing to a considerable amount. I make these statements in order to show that the continued contributions of the churches are needed. Who is prepared to say to the young men of promising piety and talents that have been taken under the patronage of the society, We cannot afford you any further assistance? This cannot be done in good faith. While we have the means of doing it, we will maintain the credit of the society unimpaired. Freely we have received, and freely let us give. Our property cannot go with us into eternity. But if used for the glory of God, it will follow us in the good it will accomplish, through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and be felt and enjoyed when these heavens and this earth are no more.

Sixth. Let the Education Society be sustained, because more ministers are urgently needed. That there is at this moment a distressing deficiency in

the number of well-qualified religious teachers is an unquestionable fact. Without taking into view the wants for foreign missionary service, it is probably safe to affirm that if we had five hundred able, devoted and faithful ministers added to our present number, they might all be usefully employed. This will probably be doubted by some, because there are here and there candidates for the pastoral office unemployed. Meeting as we not unfrequently do with ministers who are seeking for a settlement, I doubt not the question has sometimes arisen in many reflecting minds,—"Has there not been some grand mistake in our calculations respecting the want of ministers in our country? Can it be that more ministers are urgently needed, while some are out of employment?" Now the inference drawn from this source is unquestionably erroneous. Even before the Education Society existed, fathers in the ministry tell us there were some ministers unemployed. It is so still. And if the wants of our country were greater than they are, may it not be safely said, that a portion of these candidates now unemployed, would not be able to obtain a settlement. It probably is not desirable that they should. If they were now put into the pastoral office or some other evangelical service, they probably would not long continue there usefully and acceptably. If they are pious and educated, still they do not appear to be qualified by *nature** to be useful in the ministry. It is then mournfully true, that of a certain

* Baxter in his Reformed Pastor, when describing the requisite qualifications for the ministry, mentions *first;* not piety—but "a good *natural* capacity."

kind of ministers we have more than are wanted. And with regard to another portion of these unemployed candidates, and perhaps the largest portion, they are unwilling to go where they are urgently needed. New England is the place of their nativity.

"Here their best friends, their kindred dwell,"

and here they wish to spend their days. Now if some are deficient in some ministerial qualification, and if others are unwilling to go where they are urgently called, does either of these circumstances furnish evidence that able, self-denying and devoted ministers in greater numbers are not urgently needed? Certainly not. We are, then, very free to say, it is not men merely that we want, but men of the right stamp. Gideon's host was mightier after its reduction than before. Should our Education Societies bring into the ministry once in seven years twenty such men as Brainerd and Martyn, they would do more towards the conversion of the world, than they would if they brought forward as many hundreds of a different spirit. While then a more numerous ministry is urgently needed, infinitely more do we need a ministry full of the Holy Ghost; "knowing Christ, teaching Christ, following Christ;" ready to endure all things for Christ and his kingdom. We want a more self-denying ministry,—a ministry that can say when called to go to the ends of the earth, "none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself."

That many such ministers are at this moment

urgently needed, we have proof at hand. In the State of Michigan we are assured,* from good authority, that there are about fifty Presbyterian churches destitute of a pastor—a majority of which are able and willing to support the ministry without foreign aid. Some of these churches are said to be among the first in importance in the State; and would give salaries to such men as they should invite to settle among them, varying from five hundred to a thousand dollars. Besides these destitute churches, it is further stated, that there are many posts of great importance which ought to be occupied immediately.

In the State of Indiana there are forty organized churches with none to break to them the bread of life; and twenty entire counties, already containing a considerable number of inhabitants, where there is no preaching of the Presbyterian or Congregational order.

In the State of Illinois there are also about forty destitute churches, and half as many more places of great promise, where the institutions of the gospel ought to be planted with the least possible delay.

In the State of Missouri there are fifty counties, already somewhat extensively inhabited, where there is no Presbyterian or Congregational minister stationed.† There is a range of territory in the south-western section of this State two hundred miles long, by a hundred and fifty broad—more than three

* In a letter from Rev. Mr. Badger of New York to the Author.

† In a letter recently received at Andover it is stated that forty ministers could find employment at once in this State; and some of these destitute churches would be able and willing to furnish a minister with a competent support, without aid from the Missionary Society.

times as large as the whole State of Massachusetts—and already containing a population of forty thousand souls, where there is but one Presbyterian and one Congregational minister.

The extensive and fertile territory of Wisconsin—extending from lake Michigan to the Mississippi river—is fast becoming inhabited, and chiefly too by the sons and daughters of New England and New York. The population of this Territory—although the oldest white inhabitants there can only date back their settlement to 1836—already numbers, probably, over thirty thousand, and is rapidly increasing. And yet there are in this Territory, but eight or nine ministers of any description. "Three of these have something of a pastoral charge, and preach chiefly in one place. The others, some of them, at least, have more than a large county to range and labor in, preaching how and where they can. Several churches have been organized within the last year. There is at present, of our order even east of Rock river, scarcely one minister to a large county; while between that stream and the Mississippi," says a writer in the Home Missionary for May, "I hardly know of a minister in this Territory. What can one feeble missionary effect on a surface larger than any two counties in the State of New York? Next to nothing. To-day, he can feed the sheep a handful, but they are nearly starved ere he can see them again. One sermon a month, or one in three months can, under ordinary circumstances, effect but little towards the conversion of the multitude that are on the broad road. It is

hardly a drop where a shower is needed. Half-a-dozen blasts of the gospel trump in close succession, will annoy Satan's kingdom more than a hundred at long intervals. But alas, the labors of Christ's servants here are so detached—so long between—and the number of laborers so small, what can we do to meet the moral condition, and increasing demand for the bread of life, over such vast regions? 'Truly the harvest is great!' "

A most urgent request was recently received at the Home Missionary Rooms in New York for a man to labor in Rock county in the southern section of this Territory, where he would be wholly supported by the people, but as yet a man possessing the requisite qualifications has not been obtained. The request is not granted. The cry is still heard, Who will come to this post of self-denial?—but no one answers,—"Here am I."—No one responds,—"Send me."

Time will not permit me to proceed to show you that the call for more laborers is equally loud and urgent from the Territory of Iowa, and from many other portions of our country. It must be obvious, I think, from what has been already said, that there is a great and urgent need of well-qualified ministers of the gospel; men who are prepared by constitutional characteristics—physical and intellectual—by education and by grace, to occupy commanding posts in Zion; to turn the wilderness into the garden of God; and to lay broad and deep the foundations of many generations.

Finally. Let the Education Society be sus-

tained, because it is a privilege to bear a part in gathering the world into the fold and kingdom of the Redeemer. Who in this assembly would wish that the season of toil and trial and expense which must precede the latter-day glory, were annihilated? Who would wish to be transported into the enjoyments and employments of the millennial period, but by the way of the cross? Who will not rejoice that an opportunity is now afforded to labor in the cause of truth and righteousness, with such cheering prospects of success? Brethren, it is enough that we may be workers together with God—that we may spend and be spent in his service. It is enough that we may consecrate ourselves and all we have to this good work. It is enough that we may live at this most interesting period, in the joyful expectation of better and brighter days at hand. It is enough that we may die in the faith, and stand before the Redeemer with acceptance, and hear him proclaim in the presence of an assembled universe,

> "These deeds shall thy memorial be,
> Fear not, thou didst them unto me."

O my brethren, it is enough that we may at last ascend the sublime heights of the heavenly Zion, and there from the mount of God over all these wastes of sin and wo, CELEBRATE THE TRIUMPHS OF REDEEMING LOVE.

APPENDIX.

The Norfolk Auxiliary Education Society met at Dedham, June 12, 1839.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Park.

The minutes of the last meeting were then read, after which a committee was chosen to nominate a list of officers for the ensuing year.

A committee was also chosen to designate a place for the next annual meeting, and to nominate a preacher.

The committee to nominate officers, afterwards made the following report, which was accepted.

Nathaniel Miller, M. D., *President.*
Ebenezer Alden, M. D.
Rev. Ebenezer Burgess, D. D. } *Vice Presidents.*
Robert Blake, Esq.
Rev. Samuel W. Cozzens, *Secretary.*
Rev. John Codman, D. D., *Treasurer.*
Mr. Lewis Tucker, *Auditor.*
Nathaniel Guild, *General Agent.*

The committee to designate a place for the next meeting, and to nominate a preacher, made the following report, which was accepted.

The next annual meeting will be held in South Braintree, at the Rev. Mr. Matthews's meeting-house, and the Rev. Mr. Sanford of Medway, is to be the preacher.

Voted to adjourn, to meet again for the transaction of business, immediately after divine service.

Rev. Mr. Durfee preached from Genesis xlix. 10.

After public worship, the Society met according to adjournment.

The treasurer's report was then read and accepted, from which it appeared, that the amount received by the treasurer during the past year, was $847. It appeared also that $261 75 had been paid into the Parent Society, making an amount of $1,108 75, to which the collection in Dr. Burgess's society (which then, was not precisely known) is to be added. Mr. Lewis Tucker certified that he had examined the treasurer's account, and found it correctly cast and well vouched.

Voted, That the thanks of this Society be presented to the Rev. Mr. Durfee for his able and interesting discourse, and that a copy be requested for the press.

A committee was then chosen, consisting of the Rev. Messrs. Codman, Cozzens, and Durfee, to superintend the printing, &c.

Voted, also, That the thanks of this Society be presented to the Rev. Dr. Burgess and his people, for their Christian hospitality manifested on this occasion, and to the singers, for their services.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Attest,

SAMUEL W. COZZENS, *Secretary.*

Norfolk County Auxiliary Education Society *in account with* John Codman, *Treasurer.*

1838.		Dr.
July 6,	Cash paid H. Ropes, Esq., Treasurer A. E. S.,	$ 17 00
" 13,	Rev. Mr. Nash's receipts for money forwarded to the Parent Society,	140 24
May 27,	Perkins & Marvin's bill for printing Rev. Mr. Matthews's Sermon,	40 76
June 13,	Cash paid H. Ropes, Esq., Treasurer of the Am. Ed. Society,	711 53
	Cash received by H. Ropes at the Rooms, from sundry individuals,	261 75
	Articles of clothing from Dr. Burgess's Society, delivered H. Ropes, Esq.,	9 00
		$1,180 28

CONTRA.

1838.				Cr.
July 5,	*Franklin*, River End Female Charitable Society, Mrs. Electa Metcalf, Tr.,			$ 17 00
" 13,	*Sharon*, Rev. Mr. Eastman's Society,			72 00
	Dedham, Rev. Mr. Durfee's Society,			52 60
	Walpole, Rev. Mr. Bigelow's Society,			15 64
1839.				
April 7,	*Franklin*, River End Fem. Char. Society, Mrs. Electa Metcalf, Tr.			17 28
May 27,	*Braintree*, First Parish, Contribution,			35 00
	" Fem. Ed. Society, to constitute Miss Charlotte L. G. Flagg a Member for life,			43 30
June 9,	*Dorchester*, Second Parish, Contribution,	$33 00		
	" Ladies' subscription, by Mrs. Hannah Tolman,	12 00	—100 00	
	Braintree, Union Society, by Rev. Mr. Perkins,			38 49
	Wrentham, First Parish, by Rev. Mr. Fisk, Gentlemen's Education Society,	$36 00		
	" Ladies' Education Society,	30 00	—66 00	
	East Medway, Female Ed. Society,	40 07		
	" Contribution,	19 50	—59 57	
	Walpole, Female Ed. Society,	26 50		
	" Mrs. T. Smith, to constitute her son a Life member,	15 00	—41 50	
	Franklin, Female Benev. Society, to constitute Rev. T. D. Southworth a Life member,	15 50		
	" No. 6, School District,	17 00	—32 50	
	Sharon, A contribution,			29 25
	Roxbury, West, Monthly Concert,			10 50
	West Medway, Ladies' and Gent.'s Association,			41 16
	Medway, Village Church, contribution,			23 00
June 12,	*Franklin*, Subscribers,			26 25
	Stoughton, Contribution,			31 50
	Randolph, First Parish, Subscription,			56 50
	Milton, Evangelical Cong. Society,			16 25
	Dorchester, Mr. Abel and Mrs. Elis Kenney, Annual subscription,			2 00
	Medfield, Evan. Cong. Society,			14 71
	Dedham, First Church, Contribution after Annual Sermon,			62 53
The following sums were received during the year by the Treasurer of the Parent Society :—				
	Braintree, A donation from Dea. Newcomb,			90 00
	Dedham, A lady, by Mr. Guild,			1 00
	Braintree, A donation from Dea. Newcomb,			150 00
	Brookline, Charity box, $6, and Fruit tree, $4,			10 00
	Franklin, Ladies' Char. Soc. in North West School District,			1 00
	West Medway, Friends, by Mrs. Ide,			3 12
	Weymouth, North Parish, additional collection,			6 63
	Dedham, Dr. Burgess's Society, Articles of clothing valued at			9 00
				$1,180 28

Errors Excepted,

JOHN CODMAN, *Treasurer.*

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

NORFOLK COUNTY EDUCATION SOCIETY.

The Norfolk Auxiliary Education Society was organized at Dedham, May 2, 1816. The annual meetings have been held as follows:

1817. *Dorchester, June* 11. The first annual sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Emmons, from 2d Timothy i. 13.—"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me." It was printed, and has reached a second edition.

1818. *Franklin, June* 10. Rev. Dr. Codman preached from Galatians iv. 18.—"It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." Not printed.

1819. *Braintree, June* 9. Rev. Mr. Fisk preached from John iv. 35.—"Lift up your eyes, and look upon the fields, for they are white already to harvest."

1820. *Wrentham, June* 14. Rev. Dr. Gile preached from 2 Corinthians iv. 6.—"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Not printed.

1821. *Dedham, June* 13. Rev. Dr. Ide preached from Romans x. 14.—"How shall they hear without a preacher?"

1822. *Weymouth, South Parish, June* 12. Rev. Mr. Noyes preached from John i. 42.—"And he brought him to Jesus."

1823. *Medway, West Parish, June* 11. Rev. Dr. Storrs preached from Galatians vi. 9.—"And let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

1824. *Randolph, June* 9. Rev. Mr. Bailey preached from Philippians i. 15 and 18.—"Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

1825. *Needham, West Parish, June* 8. Rev. Dr. Burgess preached from Isaiah lxvi. 21.—"And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord."

1826. *Medway, East Parish, June* 14. Rev. Dr. Cogswell preached from Amos viii. 11.—"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."

1827. *Milton, June* 13. Rev. Mr. Tyler preached from Daniel xii. 14.—"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Not printed.

1828. *Sharon, June* 11. Rev. Mr. Hitchcock preached from 1 Corinthians i. 26—29.—"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of this world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."

1829. *Braintree, Union Society, June* 10. Rev. Dr. Park preached from Daniel xi. 32.—"The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

1830. *Dedham, South Parish, June* 9. Rev. Mr. Curtis preached from Daniel xii. 3.—"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Rev. Mr. Cornelius delivered an Address.

1831. *Stoughton, June* 8. Rev. Mr. Perkins preached from 2 Corinthians iv. 7.—"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

1832. *Walpole, June* 13. Rev. Ansel R. Clark preached from Psalm cxxvii. 1.—"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

1833. *Weymouth, North Parish, June* 12. Rev. Mr. Bigelow preached from Romans x. 14.—"How shall they hear without a preacher?"

1834. *Franklin, June* 11. Rev. Benjamin Labaree preached from Isaiah lix. 19.—"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Not printed.

1835. *Roxbury, Eliot Church, June* 10. Rev. H. G. Park preached from Luke xi. 28.—"Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." Not printed.

1836. *Randolph, East Parish, June* 8. Rev. Mr. Pierce preached from Matthew xiii. 38.—"The field is the world."

1837. *Dorchester village, June* 14. Rev. Mr. Smalley preached from Psalm xix. 10, 11.—"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward." Not printed.

1838. *Foxborough, June* 13. Rev. Mr. Matthews preached from Proverbs xxv. 28.—"He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down and without walls."